



The House Republicans' Budget: A House of Cards

“We don’t believe you should have to pay for tax cuts.”

Budget Committee Chairman Jim Nussle, CQ MIDDAY, 3/17/04

Remember when House Republicans pretended that they cared about budget deficits? Pretend no more! Last week, Republicans rejected a Democratic effort to apply PAYGO (pay-as-you-go) rules to spending and tax cuts to bring the budget back to balance. Republicans adopted a FY05 Budget Resolution – which will be on the Floor on Wednesday – that will increase the deficit by \$247 billion over the next five years and \$1.6 trillion over the next 10 years relative to current law; spend the entire \$1 trillion Social Security surplus; and squeeze domestic priorities.

Here’s what Republicans used to say about deficits and Social Security:

“I don’t like deficits, I don’t want deficits, and I won’t pretend deficits don’t matter.”

Budget Committee Chairman Jim Nussle, CongressDaily, 3/12/03

“[Former New York Congressman] Jack Kemp worships at the altar of tax cuts. Jack has always said that deficits don’t matter. We think that deficits do matter.”

Majority Leader Tom DeLay, New York Times, 1997

“The Republican lockbox legislation locks away the entire Social Security surplus . . . Today, we are restoring Americans’ faith and confidence in the Social Security system. It’s a promise to current and future generations of retirees: Rest assured, your hard-earned money will be saved for you so that you can enjoy your well-deserved retirement.”

Majority Leader Tom DeLay, Congressional Record, 5/23/99

“This Congress will protect 100 percent of the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds. Period. No speculation. No supposition. No projections.”

Budget Committee Chairman Jim Nussle, Press Release, 7/2/01

“I don’t know how many times we have to say it: We are not going to spend the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds. Republicans stopped the raid on Social Security and Medicare and we are not going back. Period.”

Budget Committee Chairman Jim Nussle, Congressional Record, 7/11/01

Many Republicans Can No Longer Keep Up the Fiscal Facade:

"Republicans are in denial... they have been spending money like there is no tomorrow."

Bruce Bartlett, former deputy assistant secretary for economic policy under President Ronald Reagan, Chicago Tribune, 03/09/04

"I'm not sure reducing taxes and cutting deficits are necessarily corollaries of each other."

Rep. Michael Castle (R-DE), Associated Press, 03/18/04

"If we are going to be serious about getting rid of the deficit, then we have to be willing to go across the board [including tax cuts]."

Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO), Chicago Tribune, 03/09/04

"We have got to get back to the idea that our party is the party of fiscal discipline."

Rep. Ray LaHood (R-IL), US News & World Report, 03/22/04

"I think we're reaching a critical time in which some of the old fashioned balanced budget Republicans are beginning to wonder what happened to their party. I think there is a lot of sentiment in both parties to return PAYGO to its original form."

Bill Frenzel, former Republican congressman and guest scholar, Brookings Institution, Market News International, 03/22/04

"Enough deficit spending, my friends. Enough. We are mortgaging our children's futures. When does it stop? When does the Republican Party find its soul?"

Sen. John McCain, Congressional Record, 02/12/04

